



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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December 28, 2023

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits the 2023 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) Biennial Report, which provides an update on implementation of the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP), as required by King County Code (KCC) 18.50.010.

Since the adoption of the 2020 SCAP, the urgent need to confront the many overlapping challenges of climate change has only increased as the consequences of a changing climate continue to have impacts on our region and across the globe. In our recent past, King County has experienced record heat events with deadly consequences, increased smoke from wildfires intensified by a warming climate, and historic coastal flooding. Additionally, our changing climate is affecting low-income communities and communities of color first and worst, exacerbating inequality in our region.

However, the progress that King County and our partners at the local, state, and federal levels have made over the past few years fosters a sense of hope. The 2020 SCAP outlined an ambitious and comprehensive set of actions and commitments at the County operational level as well as countywide, building on King County's long record of leading on climate action. As this progress report shows, we in the County have been hard at work moving nearly 250 different climate actions forward. At the same time, transformational policies at the state and federal levels are accelerating the transition away from fossil fuels while supporting climate equity.

The 2023 SCAP Biennial Report provides an update on all commitments made in the 2020 SCAP. It paints a familiar picture: though the County is effectively advancing climate action to reduce emissions, leading on climate equity, and preparing for the impacts of climate change, we need to do more to help create the County and community we want to leave to future generations.

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove

December 28, 2023

Page 2


This report highlights key accomplishments from the past few years, identifies areas that need greater investment, and provides a snapshot of what is ahead in the coming years. A few of the successes highlighted in the report include:

- King County and its 39 cities strengthened shared greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets to 50 percent below 2007 levels by 2030; 75 percent below 2007 levels by 2040; and 95 percent below 2007 levels and net carbon neutral by 2050.
- King County is leading regional actions to achieve 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas targets by approving stronger energy codes for commercial buildings, funding community-led projects that reduce emissions, reimagining waste management through Re+, and expanding affordable housing with transit-oriented development.
- King County is leading decarbonization of government operations by electrifying one of the nation's largest bus fleets, developing technical specifications for using low embodied carbon concrete, accelerating restoration of County owned forest and natural areas, and strengthening green building standards for King County capital projects.
- Across King County, staff are working in earnest to partner with frontline communities in ways that address the root causes and the symptoms of racial and social inequities as the County advances the goals outlined in the Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities section of the 2020 SCAP.
- The King County Green Jobs Strategy, finalized in early 2023, is well underway and has been recognized as a model for other municipalities across the country.
- King County completed the County's first Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy in 2023 and initiated the development of a countywide Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy (due in 2024) as part of a growing body of work to ensure King County is prepared for the impacts of climate change.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. The important work described throughout the report will help King County continue to lead in the fight to address the climate crisis.

If your staff have questions, please contact Marissa Aho, Climate Director, King County Executive Office, at (206) 848-0579.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff
 Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council
 Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
 Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
December 28, 2023
Page 3

Marissa Aho, Climate Director, Office of the Executive